Cultural Challenges and Subtitling Strategies in American Animated Movies

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Abstract

This article explores the cultural challenges in subtitling American animated movies, using the movie "Shrek" as a case study. The study aims to identify the cultural challenges that subtitlers may encounter while subtitling American animated movies and exploring the strategies employed in subtitling American animated movies. Using the qualitative approach and Fernandez Guerra's (2012) classification of translation strategies, the researcher analyzed twelve examples taken from the movie series "Shrek". The findings of the current thesis show that subtitling American animated movies into Arabic requires a thorough understanding of both cultures ; it also emphasizes the importance of bridging cultural gaps in order to communicate effectively with Arabic-speaking audience. The findings of the study also showed that subtitlers face diverse cultural challenges, including idiomatic expressions and proper names. Such challenges require a nuanced understanding of both source and target cultures, as their task is not just linguistic but also involves a nuanced balancing act.

Introduction

The study aims at investigating the problems and strategies in subtitling American animated movies. Generally speaking, translation involves transforming an idea from the source language (henceforth SL) into the target language (henceforth TL), considering the original text writer's intentions and style. In other words, translation is an integral process that facilitates cross-cultural communication by converting written or spoken content from one language to another while maintaining its essence and meaning.Itserves as a bridge that connects diverse linguistic and cultural communities, facilitating theglobal exchange of ideas, information, and emotions. People from diverse cultures and languages require effective communication and share information.Translation ensures that content can be accessed and understood by individuals who speak different languages. Translationalso facilitates the exchange of literature, art, music, and other cultural works across borders (Rababah & Almwajeh, 2024; Rababah, 2025; Malkawi et al., 2024)..

Translation plays a crucial role in various fields, including business, academia, literature, and arts. In business, translation helps companies communicate with customers, partners, and suppliers in various languages, bridging language barriers and building stronger relationships. In academia, translation services enable researchers to access research and knowledge from other countries, leading to new discoveries, advancements in science and technology, and a deeper understanding of different cultures. In literature and arts, translations enable works to be shared across cultures, enhancing appreciation for human diversity and richness (Ismail, 2024); Harara et al, 2024).

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According to Roman Jakobson (1959:p.233), there are three kinds of translation: intralingual translation (rewording), interlingual translation, and intersemiotic translation (transmutation). Intralingual translation is an interpretation of verbal signs by using other signs of the same language. This happens when we summarize or paraphrase a text in the same language. In other words, intralingual translation involves explaining the meaning of a word with words from the same language (Al-Mazari & Rababah, 2024 & Sanatifar & Ghamsarian, 2023).

Interlingual translation is an explanation of verbal signs by means of verbal signs of some other language. It is the most common kind, such as translating from Arabic to English and from English to French. In this kind, the translator must be familiar with the two languages in which he is translating. She/He must read the text, understand it, formulate it in his own style, and then translate the text professionally to create a target text (henceforth TT) that is as faithful as possible in order to convey the message of the source text (henceforth ST). Intersemiotic translation (transmutation) is an explanation of verbal signs using the symbols of nonverbal sign systems. It occurs when a written text is translated into different forms or codes such as music, film, dance, or painting. This kind of translation is common in translation among deaf, dumb, and hard-of-hearing people (Alshehab, & Rababah, 2020; Bani Amer et al., 2025; Bardaweel & Rababah, 2022; Dakamsih & Rababah, 2024).

Many translation theorists have emphasized that meaning and style play an essential role in the translation process besides "equivalence". Translation consists in reproducing in thereceptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida and Tabor, 1965). When translatingany text from one language to another, translators encounter many challenges, but two of the most important and frequent are:

Linguistic Challenges

Languages differ in structure and vocabulary, leading to ambiguities. Therefore, translatorsmust overcome these ambiguities to provide accurate and clear translations. Source texts may use words or phrases with multiple meanings, and it can be difficult to present the correct meaning in the target language without distorting it. It is also difficult to strikea balance between staying faithful to the original text and ensuring clarity and accuracy inthe translation.

Cultural Challenges

Translation entails transferring meaning, intent, and cultural variances from the source textto the target language as well as words. Different languages have phrases, idioms, and cultural allusions without exact analogues.Culture may greatly affect translation. Translators must correctly portray the original content while being culturally suitable for the target audience. A translator without culturalawareness may translate the content literally, distorting it. Cultural difficulties in translation affect accuracy and efficacy in many ways. Using different idioms, social conventions, historical allusions, comedy, and taboos are problems. Not addressing these cultural factors might cause miscommunication.

Due to the large amount of audiovisual content available on media and entertainment platforms, audiovisual translation (AVT) has grown in popularity worldwide. Audiovisual translation involves subtitling or dubbing videos to translate them. AVT, a multi-semiotictranslation, transfers verbal and non-verbal features of audiovisual goods, according to Au (2009). Audiovisual translation includes films, TV shows, video games, series, documentaries, ads, and more. AVT aims to make these media accessible to various audiences of different languages

and cultures.

Audiovisual translation enables access to global content, promoting multiculturalism, boosting international business, and aiding in language learning. It overcomes language barriers, enables understanding of different cultures, and facilitates interreligious communication. By overcoming language barriers, viewers can enjoy content from other countries and cultures, fostering interreligious communication and enhancing the entertainment value of audiovisual content.

According to Gottlieb (1998) there are two main types of subtitles which are open subtitles (open captions) and subtitles (closed captions). Open subtitles are not optional, which means they are permanently in view and cannot be turned off. They are often used for movies or videosin a foreign language to provide subtitles for viewers who may not understand the spoken language. While closed captions are subtitles that provide a written representation of the spoken dialogue and also include every sound effect. Subtitles areprimarily intended for viewers who are deaf or hard of hearing but are also useful for avariety of other people such as people learning a new language.

Subtitling is a type of audiovisual translation that adheres to specific rules and specifications. As a result, it is a translation with certain limitations and criteria that have an impact on the final result. Subtitles should appear and disappear synchronically with audio and shot changes must be considered to ensure the audiovisual language is understandable to target audiences unfamiliar with the source language.

Subtitling is a challenging task faced by many restrictions that force subtitlers to use specific strategies to improve the quality of subtitles. Therefore, there are subtitling strategies that can be adopted to overcome subtitling challenges.

Gottlieb (1992) believes that when creating subtitles, it is essential to ensure that the intended meaning of the source text is conveyed in a brief subtitle. Gottlieb suggests that subtitling should balance the need for accuracy in the original text with creating a target text that is understandable and appropriate for the audience's culture. Gottlieb identifies ten subtitling strategies: expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, condensation, decimation, deletion, dislocation, and resignation. Expansion adds extra meaning to the target language (TL) to explain cultural nuances, while paraphrase clarifies or adapts the meaning of a source text. Transfer preserves the target text's structure without any changes, while imitation involves rewriting the source text into the target language (TT) while maintaining the same form. Transcription rewrites words to fit the textual function, especially when a term is unusual. Condensation reduces text length to eliminate unnecessary utterances while maintaining the message. Decimation is an extreme condensation strategy used in movies when actors are in disagreement and speaking loudly and quickly. Deletion is a deletion strategy used by subtitlers to delete unnecessary parts, while dislocation is used when a special effect is more essential than the content. Resignation occurs when there is no solution to transfer a message from a source language (SL) into a target language (TL), resulting in an untranslatable meaning.

Research Questions

The study will answer the following research questions:

1- What are the cultural challenges encountered in subtitling American animated movies?

2. What are the translation strategies employed in subtitling American animated movies?

Methods and Procedures

This study uses a qualitative approach. The reason for this is to analyze translations of American animated movies, focusing on the cultural challenges subtitlers faced while subtitling American animated movies and the strategies used by subtitlers to convey the emotional impact and meaning of these cultural-bound expressions. In this study, a suitable sample was selected as a sample consisting of 12 examples of cultural expressions in the American animated movie series "Shrek ". Based on this, the researcher analyzed the cultural expressions to show the challenges that faced the subtitler while subtitling this movie and the strategies the subtitler used.The researcher specifically selected the American animated movie series "Shrek" since it contains many cultural expressions. The researcher collected data by watching an American animated movie series "Shrek" and collecting each cultural expression in the SL and subtitling it into the TL.

The researcher collected the data by watching the American animated movie series "Shrek" and manually noting each expression. The researcher selected 15 examples of cultural expressions that were included in the Shrek movie series. The researcher examined these examples in order to show the cultural challenges the subtitler faced while subtitling this movie and to explore the strategies the subtitler used. These examples were chosen in light of the subtitling challenges that subtitlers encounter when trying to subtitle expressions that are connected to the culture. The key challenges were highlighted as the cases were analyzed in both Arabic and English. The study's theoretical framework is based on Fernandez Guerra's (2012) classification of translation strategies, which are Adaptation, Borrowing, Calque, Compensation, Compression/reduction/condensation/omission, Description, Equivalence, Explicitation/expansion/amplification/diffusion, Generalization, Literal translation, Modulation, particularization, Linguistic-paralinguistic substitution, Transposition, Variation.

Results and Discussion

This section focuses on the findings and discusses the subtitling of the American animated movie "Shrek" from English into Arabic, it presents the research results in order to provide a comprehensive analysis.

The main goal of this study is to discuss the cultural challenges of subtitling American animated movies from English into Arabic. This section discusses the strategies used while subtitling the Shrek movie to render cultural expressions into the target language.

The researcher found that Fernandez Guerra's(2012) classification of translation strategies fits the investigation of cultural challenges in subtitling English-American animated movies into Arabic. The following examples clarify the data and the interpretations.

No	Target language(English)	Source language(Arabic)	Subtitling Strategy
	Aren't you two a sight for sore eyes	أنتم عزاء للعيون الحزينة **Antum 'aza' lil-'uyun al-hazina**	Adaptation
	The proper name "Shrek"	شريك	Borrowing

He huffed and puffed and he signed an eviction notice	لم تترجم	Omission
I can reach it in this **monkey suit**	ولا يمكنني الوصول إليها بهذه **البذلة السخيفة** *Wa lā yumkinunī al-wuṣūl ilayhā bi-hādhihi al-badlah al-sakhīfah*	Description
You can't breathe a word	لا، لا تنبس ببنت شفة *Lā, lā tanbis bi-bint shafah*	Equivalence
better out than in, I always say.	في الخارج أفضل من الداخل. هذا ما أقوله دومًا *Fī al-khārij afḍal min al-dākhil. Hādhā mā aqūluhu dawman*	Literal Translation
Ogres are like onions. Onions have layers and ogres have layers	الغول مثل البصلة. البصل له طبقات والغول له طبقات *Al-ghūl mithl al-baṣalah. Al-baṣal lahu ṭabaqāt wa al-ghūl lahu ṭabaqāt*	Literal Translation
Drop it and leave it alone	لا تتدخل فيما يعنيك وانس الأمر كله *Lā tataḍakhal fīmā yaʿnīk wa insi al-amr kullah*	Transposition
Come on now, Shrek.	بالله عليك شريك *Billāhi ʿalayka Shrīk*	Variation
I am here till Thursday .try the veal	انا هنا حتى يوم الخميس. جربوا العجلة *Anā hunā ḥattá yawm al-khamīs. Jarribū al-ʿajalah*	Literal Translation
You dense, irritating, miniature beast of burden!	أيها الكائن المزعج الثرثار *Ayyuhā al-kaʾin al-muzʿij al-tharthār*	Adaptation
The bush is shaped like **Shirley Bassey**	ثمة دغل شذب على هيئة **"شيرلي باسي"** *Thammat daghl shadhab ʿalá hayʾat "Shīrlī Bāsī"*	Borrowing

Example One

Source Text (ST):	Target Text (TT):
Shrek: "Better out than in, I always say"	في الخارج أفضل من الداخل. هذا ما أقوله دومًا **Fī al-khārij afḍal min al-dākhil. Hādhā mā aqūluhu dawman**

 The Context: when Shrek, Donkey, and Princess Fiona were walking to Lord Farquaad's castle, Shrek said "*Better out than in, I always say*" after letting out a huge burp. Shrek used this expression to explain his less-than-polite behavior. It's a humorous moment in the movie. This context is a funny way to highlight that Shrek doesn't care about his impolite behavior. It is a humorous moment in the movie as this context is a funny way to highlight that Shrek doesn't care about his impolite behavior. The challenge in subtitling this idiomatic expression may be to convey the meaning of the expression correctly while retaining the same humor. subtitling humor can be very difficult due to cultural differences in expressions and wordplay.

In TT, the meaning of the construction *"better outside than inside"* is that saying what is externalizing your thoughts properly mind is better than keeping them covert and unexpressed. It is often used as a justification tool for speech and means that it is more beneficial to vomit food rather than retain it and get poisoned. However, the meaning of this expression is straightforward and suggests that it is better to release or express something than to keep it inside. Furthermore, this expression is used in real life when a person burps and releases wind.

The subtitler used a direct translation strategy without taking into account cultural nuances. The translation doesn't give the exact meaning of this terminological expression. Therefore, using a direct translation strategy here may affect the accuracy of the meaning in the sense that no cultural or contextual references are made in the mode of translation. This would have a certain effect on the understanding of the intended messages conveyed in the movie.

The researcher suggests employing the substitution strategy to translate this expression correctly to convey the meaning accurately. This is expected to shed light on more detailed cultural dimensions that take into account new interpretations and explanations relevant to the cultural division and multilayered treatment of the social hierarchy. Furthermore, by using substitution strategy, cultural references are modified to be more appropriate for the target audience.

The researcher suggests employing the equivalence strategy to translate this expression correctly to convey the meaning accurately, taking into account cultural nuances. By using the equivalence strategy, cultural equivalent in Arabic is chosen to be more appropriate for the target audience. The researcher suggests this translation: **Yufaḍḍilu khurūju hādhā ʿalá al-iḥtifāẓ bihi** يفضل خروج هذا على الاحتفاظ به .

Example Two

Source Text (ST):	Target Text (TT):
Aren't you two a sight for sore eyes	أنتما عزاء للعيون الحزينة **Antumā 'azā' lil-'uyūn al-ḥazīnah**

The Context: The donkey said, *"Aren't you two a sight for sore eyes!"* When he saw Shrek and Fiona after their honeymoon. The donkey said that because he was so happy to see them again. This expression is used in this context to show the donkey's feeling of joy and relief when seeing them again, as he had not seen them for a while and did not expect to see them.

The challenge of subtitling this idiomatic expression is to convey the idiomatic meaning in a concise and culturally appropriate manner. The subtitler must balance accuracy and cultural appropriateness to ensure that the audience understands the intended feelings behind the expression. The meaning of this idiomatic expression "*Aren't you a sight for sore eyes*" is a way of saying that you are very pleased to see someone or that you think someone is very attractive. This expression is often used to express happiness and relief when seeing someone after a long absence or separation.

The subtitler translated this idiomatic expression *" Aren't you two a sight for sore eyes"* into "انتما عزاء للعيون الحزينة ". This subtitling conveys the implicit meaning of the English expression, and the expression in Arabic conveys feelings similar to the expression in English. The word "العزاء" is equivalent to the form "المواساة" in Arabic. In the Arabic culture, this expression signifies the welcome and joy of meeting specific people, particularly during times of hurt or sadness.

In subtitling this idiomatic expression, the subtitler used an Adaptation strategy. The subtitler replaced the word "*sight*" with an Arabic cultural term, which is "عزاء" to give the intended meaning of the expression accurately. The subtitler used this strategy to bridge the gap between cultures and also to ensure that the Arabic audience understands the intended feelings behind the expression. In this regard, presenting such a translation for the subtitle would be able to show the act performed by the word "عزاء" in the social interactive language use whether in the formal or informal settings.

Example Three

Source Text (ST):	Target Text (TT):
You can't breathe a word.	لا، لا تنبس ببنت شفة *Lā, lā tanbis bi-bint shafah*

The Context: The idiomatic expression "*You can't breathe a word*" was said by Fiona to the Donkey when he revealed her secret that she turns into an ogre when the sun goes down. So Fiona said "*You can't breathe a word* " because she insists that Donkey shouldn't tell her secret to Shrek.

The challenge of subtitling this idiomatic expression is to find a culturally equivalent expression in Arabic language to convey the intended meaning of this idiomatic expression.

The idiomatic expression "*breathe not a word*" emphasizes the importance of maintaining complete secrecy, urging individuals to keep information or secrets, without speaking a single word about a matter. In other words, this expression refers to avoiding revealing a secret and keeping it hidden, as individuals must promise not to breathe a word about a particular thing. This expression is based on the verb "*breathe*" meaning "*to pronounce*".

The subtitler translated this idiomatic expression using an adaptation strategy to " لا، لا تنبس ببنت شفة" which is an Arabic cultural expression. The subtitler provided a very accurate translation for this expression especially when there is the indication that it was totally a prohibiting expression using "تنبس ببنت شفة"   and this form really an Arabic-intrinsic content and has the manipulation of sharpness in determining silence.

Example four

Source Text (ST):	Target Text (TT):

| Drop it and leave it alone | لا تتدخل فيما يعنيك وانس الأمر كله |
| | **Lā tataḍakhal fīmā yaʿnīk wa insi al-amr kullah** |

The context: Shrek said to the donkey: *"Drop it and leave it alone"*. This happened when the donkey tried to find out what Shrek was hiding from him. Shrek said this idiomatic expression because he does not want to discuss personal matters with anyone. The Shrek intends to demonstrate to the donkey that he isn't willing to share his emotions or personal experiences with anyone.

Subtitling cultural expression between Arabic and English is challenging due to cultural differences, requiring not just finding similar words but capturing the essence in a natural and culturally relevant manner. The cultural expression " *Drop it and leave it alone*" cannot be translated directly because the direct translation will not give the intended meaning of expression. The subtitler must find a similar and appropriate expression with the Arabic culture to convey the implicit meaning of the English language.

The subtitler used modulation and transposition strategies to translate "*Drop it and leave it alone*". Modulation involves using different expressions to convey the same meaning and it is used to find an Arabic idiomatic expression that carries a similar idiomatic to this expression and is appropriate for Arabic culture, and also the process of transposition involves changing the grammatical structure without changing the meaning.

Finally, the researcher confirms the subtitle's translation of this idiomatic expression "لا تتدخل فيما يعنيك وانس الأمر كله" by using the Modulation and transposition strategies to deliver the message in a natural way in the TL.

Example Five

Source Text (ST):	Target Text (TT):
"Shrek" (A proper name)	شريك

Subtitling the proper name "*Shrek*" into Arabic is a cultural challenge because the name has no direct synonym or meaning in Arabic culture. The proper name "*Shrek*" is a Western cultural figure, and this name has become a symbol of the ogre. Thus, finding a proper name in Arabic culture that has the same personality and humorous qualities as a Shrek is challenging. In this context, it is necessary to find a proper name from the Arabic culture to express the attributes of the character "*Shrek*" in order to maintain the social and moral characteristics in the Arabic culture. If this is not possible , maybe it is preferable to let the audience know about the character *"Shrek"* and what refers to.

It is better to translate it by writing it using Arabic letters, and this is what the subtitler did, as she/he used the Borrowing strategy to translate this proper name but subtitling it to "شريك" may lead to some problems. It can be read by any audience in the wrong way especially if the person does not know about a "*Shrek*" before, so it may be read in a way that leads to a meaning of close friendship or partner.

Furthermore, one of the possible suggestions offered by the researcher is that this proper name to "شرك" be written without the letter "ي" in the middle because the word "شرك" has no meaning in Arabic unless is used with the diacritic "a" as in "شرَك" to indicate that this would be a " trap" reflecting the negative characteristics of the character *"Shrek"* . So, when the audience read it,

they will know that this is a name and also because it provides a phonetic representation of the English name in addition to its social and moral reflection.

Example Six

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
Come on now, Shrek.	بالله عليك شريك **Billāhi ʿalayka Shrek**

The context: After Shrek and Fiona played king and queen in front of the community, "*Shrek*" returned to the palace feeling frustrated and exhausted. He found a donkey sleeping next to him, causing him to feel nervous. *"Shrek"* kicked the donkey out. The donkey said to the *"Shrek"*: "*Come on, Shrek*". The donkey said this to tell *"Shrek"* to calm down and not take things too seriously.

The cultural challenge in subtitling colloquial English expressions is the attempt to find the colloquial and informal tone of the expression in the Arabic language. The English colloquial expression "*Come on, Shrek*" is used to instruct someone to hurry, and try harder and also sometimes it's used to tell someone to relax, calm down, and not take things too seriously.

The subtitler used a variation strategy to translate "*Come on*" to find an Arabic religious expression that carries a similar colloquial dialect to this term and is appropriate for Arabic culture. The subtitler changed the tone, style, and dialect. The subtitler translated it to "بالله عليك" which is a part of the religious discourse used in Arabic expression that is equivalent to the dialect and intended meaning in the English colloquial expression. The researcher conforms to the subtitler's translation because she/ he conveys the intended meaning of the expression through a change in tone and social dialect. The main contribution maintained by the subtitler is that he/she has made a shift in the dialect level between the informal in the SL and the religious equivalence in the TL which -we think- is very proper as it maintains the cultural intelligibility and mutual understanding of the ideas in both languages.

Example Seven

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
He huffed and puffed and he signed an eviction notice	Not translated by the subtitler

The context: Lord Farquaad evicted fairy tale creatures from his kingdom and forced them to live in the Shrek swamp. Shrek was surprised by the fairy tale creatures in his swamp. The creatures revealed that Farquaad forced them to live there, and one pig said "*He huffed and puffed and he signed an eviction notice"*. Shrek then decided to confront Farquaad to get his swamp back.

The challenge of subtitling this idiomatic expression is to find an Arabic cultural expression that conveys the idiomatic meaning in a concise and culturally appropriate way. The subtitler must balance accuracy and cultural appropriateness to ensure that the audience understands the intended feelings behind the expression.

The meaning of this idiomatic expression "*He huffed and he puffed"* is breathing loudly and heavy way due to physical effort. This expression is also often used to express annoyance or anger.

In subtitling this idiomatic expression, the subtitler used an omission strategy. She/he did not translate it because he/she probably could not find an equivalent expression in Arabic that gave the implied meaning and intended humor. Actually, this is a shortcoming encountered in the translation process especially in the translation of movie subtitles. Alternatively, the translators should have found the equivalent expressions for such subtitles. This would be easily accomplished since the produced expressions are not that much technical elements in a jargon or in some similar technical discourse.

The researcher suggests employing both literal and variation strategies to translate this expression correctly to convey the intended meaning of the English idiomatic expression and to capture the tone of the original expression. The researcher suggests this translation: "لهث ونفث غاضبًا ووقع. إشعارًا بالإخلاء" This translation fulfils the total equivalence levels as it negates the possibility of omitting the translated material as well as its intended meaning. It is highly improbable and unacceptable to omit the translation for such subtitles as they reflect dialogues that are quickly presented on the screen.

Example Eight

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
I can reach it in this **monkey suit**	ولا يمكنني الوصول إليها بهذه **البذلة السخيفة** *Wa lā yumkinunī al-wuṣūl ilayhā bi-hādhihi al-badlah al-sakhīfah*

The context: When Shrek and Fiona played king and queen in front of society, they wore a formal suit to fit in with the royal seating. During the context ,Shrek expresses discomfort and awkwardness in formal clothing, using the term "*monkey suit*" as a humorous way to describe it, implying that it feels unnatural and uncomfortable.

The challenge of subtitling the English colloquial expression "*monkey suit*" into Arabic is to find an equivalent expression that conveys the same implicit meaning while considering cultural differences. The English term "*monkey suit*" typically refers to a formal or business suit, but it has a playful tone. Shrek used this expression to express his dissatisfaction with wearing a formal suit and his discomfort with it.

The word "*monkey*" in Arabic culture indicates the absurdity or ugliness of something. The monkey word is used as an example of undesirable behavior. As the expression "*monkey suit*" in the Arabic language is a reference to inappropriate and ridiculous clothing, it is used to criticize someone's clothing. The subtitler translated the English colloquial expression "*monkey suit*" into "البذلة السخيفة" using a description strategy, the subtitler used it to describe the suit that Shrek is wearing as inappropriate for him and uncomfortable.

The researcher would adopt such a strategy in the translation of the expression "*monkey suit*" into "البذلة السخيفة" as it is a descriptive expression that conveys the humorous and informal tone of the original expression. Actually, this expression with its present translation supports the cultural elements that contribute to maintaining the matching of semantic and pragmatic levels of equivalence. Possibly, we can encounter a further fine challenge for such a translation as it would be tightly connected to the context itself without consideration to the pragmatic and contextual factors. These equivalent expressions might be the following translation possibilities. One possibility is the literal translation which we would not adopt at any level except for in children's language context : بدلة قرد. The other possible alternative is following translation which is بدلة عمل

This type of translation would be acceptable if the translator is aware of the context of the movie and is able to make the proper comparison in different context of the movie.

Example Nine

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
I am here till Thursday .Try the veal	انا هنا حتى يوم الخميس. جربوا العجلة *Anā hunā ḥattá yawm al-khamīs. Jarribū al-ʿajalah*

The Context

When Shrek went to Lord Farquaad to get back his swamp, he found that there was a tournament to find the best person who could go to save Fiona from the monster dragon. In the tournament, Shrek competed against other knights to determine who would have the "*honor*" of rescuing Princess Fiona for Lord Farquaad. Shrek was victorious through his comedic fighting style. After the tournament ended, Shrek said, "*I am here till Thursday. Try the veal*" .

Subtitling English cultural expression into Arabic can be challenging due to its reliance on cultural nuances and wordplay that may not have direct equivalents in Arabic language. The cultural challenge in subtitling the expression "*I'm here till Thursday. Try the veal*" into Arabic lies in the cultural differences surrounding customs and traditions. When subtitling into Arabic, the subtitler may face the challenge of adapting to cultural nuances.

The expression "*I am here till (a certain day)*" is a humorous way for restaurant waiters to end conversations with customers, suggesting they will be present for a short time. Also, they said "*try the veal*" which is a common punchline serves as a stereotypical recommendation for a dish. Furthermore, this expression is also used when comedians perform in clubs, and they end their performances by saying, "*I'm here (all night/until a certain day), try the veal*". It's a comedic way to conclude interactions. The expression "*Try the veal*" is like "*That's all, guys*!" "*It's a way to close a joke or a comedy set. It's similar to saying "been there, done that*".

The subtitler used a literal translation strategy without taking into account cultural nuances. The literal translation did not give the intended meaning of this expression. The subtitler used this strategy because there is no equivalent in the Arabic language for this expression.

The researcher suggests employing the omission strategy for this expression. The researcher believes that it is better not to translate it because there is no equivalent expression in Arabic that gives the implied meaning and intended humor.

Example Ten

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
Ogres are like onions. Onions have layers and ogres have layers	الغول مثل البصلة. البصل له طبقات والغول له طبقات *Al-ghūl mithl al-baṣalah. Al-baṣal lahu ṭabaqāt wa al-ghūl lahu ṭabaqāt*

The context: The expression "*Ogres are like onions. Onions have layers and ogres have layers* "was said by Shrek during a conversation with Donkey. Donkey was curious to know why Shrek was always angry and isolated from the world. Shrek used the metaphor of an onion to explain that like onion, it has layers that can be peeled away to reveal more underneath. Shrek aimed to

show Donkey that there is more to his personality than just being a scary, angry ogre and that he shouldn't judge him based on his appearance .

There is a challenge in subtitling the Englich metaphorical expression *"Ogres are like onions. Onions have layers and ogres have layers"* into Arabic, as finding an appropriate and culturally relevant equivalent is not an easy task. Choosing the right translation is crucial to convey the intended meaning to the Arabic-speaking audience accurately.

The English metaphor "*Ogres are like onions*" is a humorous and popular way to describe the idea that individuals can be complex and have many layers, suggesting that understanding them goes beyond their outward appearance and involves uncovering their true feelings and personality. This expression does not have a similar expression in Arabic culture, as the phrase "*Ogres like onions*" is not familiar in Arabic culture.

 In this context, the subtitler opted for the literal strategy by subtitling *"Ogres are like onions. Onions have layers and ogres have layers "* as (الغول مثل البصلة. البصل له طبقات والغول له طبقات).

The subtitler used a literal translation strategy without taking into account cultural nuances. The translation did not give the exact meaning of this expression. Therefore, using a literal translation strategy here may affect the accuracy of the meaning.

Example Eleven

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
You dense, irritating, miniature beast of burden!	أيها الكائن المزعج الثرثار *Ayyuhā al-kaʾin al-muzʿij al-tharthār*

The context: When Shrek and Donkey were on their way to save Princess Fiona from the dragon. Donkey was talkative and wanted to know all about Shrek, but Shrek refused. Shrek became very angry due to donkey's excessive talkativeness. Shrek said to the donkey " dense, irritating, miniature beast of burden!".

Subtitling expressions that contain cultural nuances can be quite a challenge. The cultural challenge in subtitling this expression is to find equivalent words that convey the insult without offending the Arabic culture. There are cultural differences in terms of the use of insults and animal metaphors. The subtitler needs to convey the expression carefully to ensure that the message is conveyed appropriately in the target language.

In the ST "*You dense, irritating, miniature beast of burden*!", The word dense means that someone is very slow to understand, and it is synonym of stupid and thickheaded. Irritating is used to express something or someone that causes displeasure, anger, or annoyance and It's a straightforward way of expressing annoyance. miniature is used to express something small of its kind. Finally, the beast of burden is an animal such as a donkey or an ox that is used to carry or pull things.

The subtitler used adaptation strategy to translate "*You dense, irritating, miniature beast of burden!"* into "أيها الكائن المزعج الثرثار". The subtitler employed this strategy to convey a similar meaning in Arabic while considering cultural nuances.

Example Twelve

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
The bush is shaped like **Shirley Bassey**	ثمة دغل شذب على هيئة **"شيرلي باسي"**

	Thammat daghl shadhab ʿalá hayʾat "Shīrlī Bāsī"

The cultural challenge in subtitling Proper name into Arabic is to find an equivalent that connects with resonates with an Arabic-speaking audience while maintaining cultural reference.

Subtitling the proper name "*Shirley Bassey*" into Arabic is a cultural challenge because the name has no direct synonym in Arabic culture. "*Shirley Bassey*" is a Welsh singer and one of the most famous vocalists in Britain. Finding a proper name in Arabic culture that has the same personality qualities as a "*Shirley Bassey*" is difficult.

It is better to translate it by writing it using Arabic orthography, and this is what the subtitler did, as used the borrowing strategy to translate this proper name. Furthermore, in the context of translation, it would be advantageous to preserve the original name in order to uphold the complete emotional resonance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The researchers investigated the cultural challenges that faced subtitler while subtitling the cultural expressions in the American animated movie series "Shrek" into Arabic. After the in-depth analysis, it was noted that the subtitler overcame most of the challenges encountered during the translation process using the appropriate translation strategy for the context of each of the cultural expressions mentioned in the movie. This study is the original attempt to investigate the cultural challenges in subtitling cultural expressions in the American animated movies. This study addresses two key research questions: the first is to identify the challenges that Subtitler faces, and the other is to identify the strategies that Subtitler used while subtitling American animated movies.

The researcher chose the American animated movie series "Shrek" precisely because of the many cultural expressions and terms it contains. The researcher collected data by watching a movie in English, focusing on the subtitles in the target language on half of the screen, and noting each cultural expression and term. The researcher chose about 12 expressions from among the expressions, references, and cultural terms included in the film. As every case was examined in both Arabic and English, the major issues and challenges were manifested.

The researcher emphasizes that there is no one strategy that fits all expressions. The subtitler's choice of strategy depends on the context, the depth of cultural references, and the balance between accuracy and cultural appropriateness. The researcher suggested alternative strategies in some cases, calling for a careful approach that captures the spirit of the original expression.

In conclusion, subtitling American animated movies into Arabic requires a deep understanding of both the source and target cultures. The subtitler acts as a cultural mediator, using different strategies to convey the implied meaning while maintaining the nuances and humor of the original content. These examples exemplify the complex nature of subtitling cultural expressions and the importance of employing strategies that bridge cultural gaps, particularly for Arabic-speaking audiences.

Recommendations

Subtitlers must have a deep understanding of both source and target languages and their cultures, staying updated on current events and idiomatic expressions. Prioritizing the intended message over literal interpretation is crucial, especially in culturally sensitive situations. Contextual

explanations or footnotes can help readers understand cultural nuances. Native speakers and cultural consultants can provide valuable input. The choice of the right translation strategy is crucial for effectively conveying movie content at intelligible levels.

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